/77 cont./

115 157 The various men on detached duty were very different in their usefulness for my purposes. Some tired too quickly, others were too unsteady. Fat, peasant-like Yapü, for example, yawned after a few minutes, and his face seemed to say, "Sir, you are asking too much," and Luchu, the vain fop, only wanted to amuse himself. Of the younger ones, only the remarkable Kulekule was of any use to me. He was, in fact, taciturn and reserved, but he obviously liked to come, laughed quietly to himself, and then when he opened his mouth to speak, he answered better than the rest. He had received beads from me for a pot, but he had to give them up; I presented him with new ones and did not accept another pot that he brought me. He was happy about that, gave [123] me a bowl of the insipid pogu drink, and sat down beside me, leaning his head confidently against my shoulder. My most faithful guardian was Paleko; with his long hair sprinkled with gray, his fine old face, he could very well have been /78/ director ooo emeritus of a Gymnasium. In fact, we were often reminded of European physiognomies, whose owners would perhaps protest at being compared to a naked Indian. Ehrenreich and I, for example, were jokingly and seriously in complete agreement that we recognized a couple of gentlemen from the Berliner Anthropologischen Gesellschaft on the Kulisehu; naturally these gentlemen did not resemble the Indians, but the Indians resembled the 123 gentlemen. I was alone with Paleko for half days at a time. Now and then, Eva or my intended or the Egyptian came alone or together, giving the two of us a little company.

●461 Paleko plaited dainty little baskets, repaired weirs, twisted twine out of palm fibers, and did whatever else there was 126 in the way of such light tasks requiring patience. He gave me not 191 only words and sentences from his mother tongue, but also a list of Nahuquá words, which proved that he had associated a great deal 114 with these neighbors. He put less value on learning my language than the young people did. I would rather have given them German words instead of the Portuguese, but I regarded it as my duty not to confuse the poor souls for the future. Since my knowledge of Bakaïrí was still very meager, I progressed but slowly.

B 123 /102 cont./ been among the Mehinakú /Mehinacu/, although he did not know their language, to carry out my plan, but one was encouraged by the example of the other.

W 122 B 461 We set out early on 10 October and reached the harbor of the Mehinakú on 12 October at 11:00 in the forenoon. We had not hurried particularly; the two rowed best only when I provided a good example. The most dreadful thing to me was that they traced all the bends in the river and never cut off one of them by crossing it. There was not a fish, not a bird, that did not hold their attention. They shot at, without hitting, several gallinaceous birds, a capybara that was swimming across the river was wounded in its hind leg and, with the arrow, ran screaming into the woods. We slept that night beside an inlet with an abundance of fish and made a good catch. The two roasted fish all night long, carefully keeping the fire going under the wooden grill; they had

W [142] [302] ←

B 252

Fig. 4. Mehinakú woman.

set up their hammocks so close that they could comfortably reach out, turn the fish, occasionally consume a piece, and have the benefit of the fire's warmth.

W 131 B 504 W [531] B 581 B 576 B [757] On the second morning they told me that the bank on the left belonged to the Mehinakú, on the right to the Nahuquá. The harbor lay along a steep sandbank where a small brook emptied. Rhomboid designs were scratched on the trees. The Bakaïrí shoved the canoe far up into the brook and carefully concealed the oars and carrying baskets, which still contained remnants of fish and beijús, in the woods. Tumayaua prepared a gift for the Mehinakú hosts and for this purpose hung a rosary-like cord around his neck, on which were strung fruits with an oily content. The oil was rubbed on the skin scratched by the medicinal scarifier of the Indians.